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Interaction in Collaborative Writing between International and Domestic Students in an Indonesian University

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Abstract

This research investigates verbal interaction in collaborative writing between students from two countries with different L1 when writing an academic essay in a foreign language writing class. Eight students from Indonesia and China participated, and were divided into Indonesian-Indonesian pairs and Indonesian-Chinese pairs. Using the method of qualitative content analysis, the transcripts from their communication were coded inductively and then categorized. The findings denote that there are three categories in their spoken interaction: what to write (ideas), where to write (structural organization), and how to write (language-related). Similarly, all pairs focused their discussions on 'what to write' (ideas to be written in the essays). However, Indonesian-Indonesian pairs also discussed 'the language-related aspects' mostly about lexical choice and the meaning, more than the mixed pairs. The Indonesian-Chinese pairs conversed, in most of their time, about the content through sharing, explaining, and negotiating their ideas. As the implication, in order to produce an essay with the same length and type, the mixed pairs executed more time in their spoken interaction.

Keywords: Collaborative, international students, domestic students, pair work, verbal interaction.

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1. INTRODUCTION

By definition, collaborative writing is the joint production of writing by some writers. Shafie et al. (2010) state that collaborative writing is an activity of editing, reviewing, and co-writing a piece of writing to accomplish a common goal. Similarly, Widodo (2013) described the common practice of collaborative writing as the work of two or more students to share knowledge and linguistic resources and negotiate them in order to construct a joint product. In other words, collaborative writing comprises the factors of sharing ideas and linguistic aspects of writing, negotiating, editing and reviewing a joint piece of writing.

Ritchie and Rigano (2007) differentiate collaborative writing in three types: first is *turn writing* which means that each member of the group writes his or her own part of the writing and then the leader of the group combines the parts and harmonizes it, second type is *lead writing* that has only one member of the group writes the draft and then it is revised by all group members, and lastly is *writing together side by side* in which all members write the draft together, discuss, negotiate, and finally revise it. This research follows the *writing together side by side* process with consideration that the participants' verbal interaction becomes the focus, therefore they need to share the same amount of time and work to be done together in their collaboration.

Collaborative writing has also drawn enormous attention among language researchers with regards to its various types of grouping and their characteristics. For example, in a broader view of collaboration, Jacobs et al. (2002) state that from the eight principles of cooperative learning, one of them which is termed as 'heterogeneous grouping', which denotes that collaborative learning between heterogeneous groups (those who have different proficiency level, interest, non-identical worldview, experience, and motivation) offer more learning opportunity than those of homogenous groups. Therefore, by adopting that principle, the collaboration between learners from different nationalities (e.g. international students from different countries study in the same university and take the same subject) would also create a richer learning opportunity as much as the barriers that will possibly happen.

In relation with the rich linguistic and non-linguistic factors in the writing collaboration of participants from different countries, this research attempts to investigate the linguistic, structural and transactional aspects in their verbal interaction during the collaboration in writing an essay. The significance of this study is to promote collaborative writing by studying its characteristics and to contribute to the field of language writing studies particularly in the broad scope of global collaboration between people around the world. Correspondingly, this research aims to answer these questions:

1. What do the two types of pairs discuss in the collaboration?
2. What are the differences and similarities in the verbal interaction between Indonesian-Indonesian pairs and Chinese-Indonesian pairs?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Sociocultural Theory by Vygotsky (1978) is the fundamental theory underlying the research on human interaction in the classroom. This theory underlines scaffolding or the use of language in the interaction to encourage learning through the

shared knowledge from the more knowledgeable others to the novice ones in groups or dyads. In the lens of collaborative writing, the process of sharing and negotiating accommodate learning in both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects.

Grounded on the sociocultural theory, [Watanabe and Swain \(2007\)](#), and [Swain and Watanabe \(2013\)](#) had studied the interaction on students' collaborative work that showed language-related problem solving. In addition, many studies found that partners who worked collaboratively on writing reconstruction tasks could improve their writing by generating more ideas on their second work compared to those who worked individually ([Storch, 2005](#); [Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009](#)). Furthermore, [Nassaji and Tian \(2010\)](#) and [Watanabe \(2014\)](#) reported that collaboration in writing participants working collaboratively produced more accurate completion on the task. Lastly, [Ferdiansyah \(2018\)](#) argued that by socio-cognitively through social interaction in collaborative writing, students are able to develop a repertory and creativity with their peer support as the significant factors in the process. In conclusion, the ample empirical evidence on the sociocultural theory has shown that social interaction in the context of collaborative writing encourages learning on both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects.

Research on collaborative writing in the last decade and a few years before have covered some of the focuses: collaborative writing features ([Storch, 2002](#); [Watanabe & Swain, 2007](#); [Yong, 2010](#)), traditional face-to-face collaborative writing and the comparison of sub focuses such as gender, proficiency, EFL and ESL ([Azkarai, 2015](#); [Biria & Jafari, 2013](#); [Esquinca, 2011](#); [Jafari & Ansari, 2012](#); [Storch, 2007](#); [Thomas, 2014](#)), comparing group, pair, and individual work ([Dobao, 2012](#); [Hunzer, 2011](#); [McDonough & Fuentes, 2015](#)), relationship between collaboration and L2 acquisition ([Nassaji & Tian, 2010](#)), collaborative writing processes ([Storch, 2011](#)) and online (computer-assisted) collaborative writing ([Choi, 2014](#); [Lee & Wang, 2013](#); [Limbu & Markauskaite, 2015](#); [Musk, 2016](#); [Suwantarathip & Wichadee, 2014](#); [Wichadee, 2013](#); [Yeh et al., 2011](#)). However, the verbal interaction aspects that featured collaborative writing have become the focus of research for years. Firstly, in the focus of interaction aspects, [Yong \(2010\)](#) describes the features as mutual interaction, negotiation, cognitive conflict, shared expertise, affective factors, use of L1, backtracking, and humour, in the investigation of the nature and dynamics of collaborative writing derived from the study in a university in Malaysia. Secondly, numerous studies on traditional face-to-face collaborative writing had been conducted regarding the advantages of collaborative writing linguistically and non-linguistically.

In collaborative writing, students have wider opportunities to interact with others and in this way, they could enlarge their knowledge and it would influence them to improve their writing. As an advantage of it, in the classroom context, collaboration in writing accelerates the opportunity of personal and interpersonal interactions between the collaborators through direct negotiation of ideas to develop a cohesive and coherent writings without waiting for peer review or teacher's feedback ([Widodo, 2013](#)). When the instructors or the teachers are not the only sources students have to learn or to solve writing problems, as a result, earning opportunity will increase. This is something that has been revealed by many studies, e.g. [Kost \(2011\)](#) and [Storch \(2002\)](#) studies on pair work where students collaborated to solve not only grammatical and lexical issues in their writing but also solved discourse issues. Moreover, collaboration has given more advantage from the non-linguistic aspects such as interpersonal communication skills critical thinking and ability to solve problems ([Caple & Bogle, 2013](#)). In her study on

the comparison of the pair and individual work on grammar focused text editing task, [Storch \(2007\)](#) shows that the work of collaboration is linguistically more accurate. It can be concluded that the studies on communicative interaction in collaborative writing have shown its advantages both from the linguistic and non-linguistic aspects.

Among the research on collaborative writing, there is only a limited number that focus on the collaboration between individuals from different nationalities such as in the context of international students in their study abroad period. One of the few, [Amirkhiz et al. \(2013\)](#), reveal that students from Iran and Malaysia with equal language proficiency focused on different aspects in their collaboration. Malaysian students tended to be interested in the interaction rather than the language aspects of the writing. On the other hand, the Iranian students focused more on the meta-language aspect of the writing. The study also finds that the differences are related to how English is taught at the school in their home countries. As there are possibilities of other different linguistic and textual aspects in their spoken interaction, it is important to study the characteristics of the verbal interaction during the process of collaboration between international students in order to comprehend the situation and challenges of this type of collaborative writing as it has become the more common type of writing collaboration in this era.

3. METHODS

This research is descriptive qualitative and deploys content analysis research method to analyse the data. [Drisko and Maschi \(2015\)](#) state that books, images, physical artefacts, audio files, video files, or other media as the types of the content of the texts to be analysed in qualitative research. This research analysed texts scripted from audio files.

For the analysis, this study applied the stages of content analysis: coding, categorizing, and interpreting, which were also used by [Storch \(2002\)](#) as the method of her study on pattern of interaction on ESL pair work. In the first stage of data analysis, she analysed and carefully read and reread the transcripts to find out the main features and the patterns of conversation to set codes and the dominant categories in the interactions.

The data analysis stages were adopted from the streamlined codes-to-theory model as in Figure 1 ([Saldaña, 2015](#)). As described by [Saldaña \(2015\)](#), the first stage is coding. A code is a word or short phrase that contains significant core summative points of a fragment or a portion of language from a data set. The next stage is categorization. [Richards and Morse \(2007\)](#) define categorization as the shift from diversity of data to the more focused data in forms of what they present. In the last stage, categories will be transcended into themes, concepts, or theories.

In this study, the initial coding as the first cycle of coding generated the first list of codes from the data set completely and the second cycle was re-coding the whole data set with the reduction of minor parts of the transcripts to focus on the study; the aspects of writing an essay. After coding, then the categories are identified (see Figure 2) and codes are described to answer research question one: what the participants discuss in the collaboration.

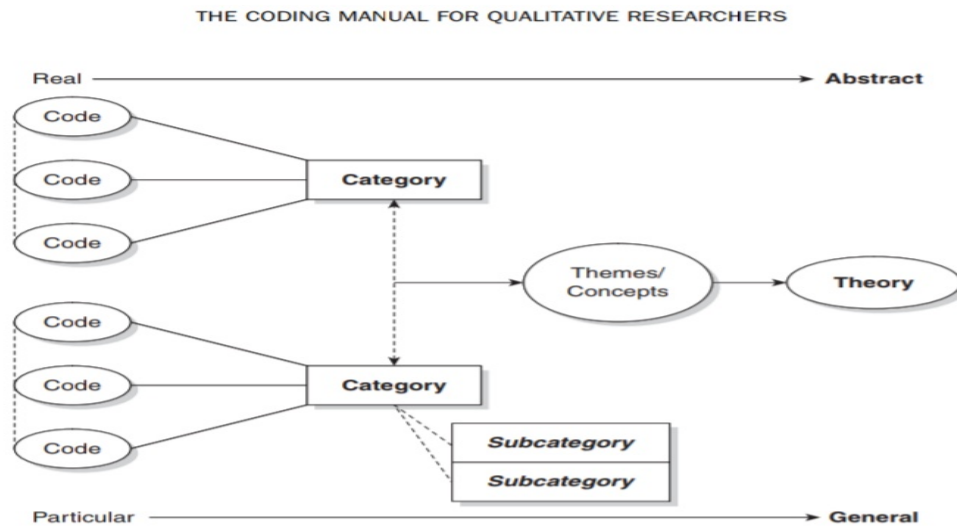


Figure 1. Streamlined codes-to-theory model for qualitative enquiry (Saldaña, 2015, p. 12)

CS3: So we choose the 3 question. (1) IS3: Yea number 3. Do you bring a pen?	(1) CHOOSING TOPIC
CS3: I think for the first paragraph we should talk about following the economic have growth with rapidly. (2) IS3: ooh ya ya nowadays. CS3: The economic growth rapidly. IS3: Rapidly. CS3: Meanwhile it will. IS3: Sorry?	(2) MAIN IDEA
CS3: No not write I just talk about my opinion "meanwhile it will relate to the people's stress the few ways because when the economic growth so they want earning more money so in this way they can meet their demand and following economic growth in the market. They'll have a lot of product so to the people want to buy. They have a large demand they want from this market. (3) IS3: The economic growth.	(3)SUPPORTING IDEA
CS3: It will also cause stressful environment for the people. (4) IS3: For the people around the globe. CS3: The demand of the people. IS3: Oh my God I have bad hand writing right? haha the demand of the people will increase. CS3: Because of the modern life right?	(4) SUPPORTING IDEA
CS3: Ya. How many sentence in the first paragraph? (5) IS3: First paragraph? we should find the lead in (aaa reading the sentences)	(5) NUMBER OF SENTENCES IN A PARAGRAPH
CS3: we should explain what the stressful the people face IS3: yaa the reasons what CS3: and we will finally give some suggestion (6) IS3: ya CS3: (laughing)	(6) DECIDING IDEA IN A PARAGRAPH
IS3: so should we put here? here? (7)	(7) WHERE TO WRITE
there are several causes about the modern life and also how the stress will reduce. (8)	(8) MAIN IDEA
CS3: hmmm and finally we give some suggestion make the stress reduce. IS3: And also some suggestions to make the stress reduced. CS3: so we should find first how to make people reduce. (9)	(9) SUPPORTING IDEA

Figure 2. Example of initial coding stage.

3.1 Participants

The participants of this research were eight students studying at the same university in Indonesia and were taking an English subject which focused on essay writings. This subject is one of the four compulsory English subjects that the students should take during their undergraduate study period. The participants were in their second semester at the university and their ages ranged from eighteen to twenty years old. One of the participants is male and the other seven participants are female. Four of them are from the Republic of China and four other students are from Indonesia. They were chosen based on the lecturer's class observation and consideration of their individual English writing general participation in the classroom.

Table 1. The list of pairs.

No	Country	Participants
Pair 1	Indonesia- Indonesia	IS1 (Indonesian student 1) and IS2 (Indonesian student 2)
Pair 2	Indonesia-Indonesia	IS3 (Indonesian student 3) and IS4 (Indonesian student 4)
Pair 3	Indonesia-China	IS1 and CS1 (Chinese student 1)
Pair 4	Indonesia-China	IS2 and CS2 (Chinese student 2)
Pair 5	Indonesia-China	IS3 and CS3 (Chinese student 3)
Pair 6	Indonesia-China	IS4 and CS4 (Chinese student 4)

3.2 Data Collection and Data Analysis

The participants were assigned to work in pairs to write some problem-solution essays. Students from Indonesia were asked to work in pairs two times. One pair collaboration was with a partner from the same country and one more collaboration was with a partner from the different one. There were three topics given as options:

- Many schools these days have problems with poor behaviour. Why do you think these problems occur? What could be done to tackle these problems?
- A serious problem affecting countries right across the globe is the lack of water for drinking, washing and other household uses. Why do many countries face water shortages, and what could be done to alleviate the problem?
- Although most people are richer than in the past, modern life seems very stressful, and the number of people suffering from stress are at record levels. What are the main causes of stress in modern life, and how could the stress be reduced?

All of them were problem-solution essay questions. The participants then chose one topic and wrote the essay with their partners. The type of collaboration the participants had was the third type: *writing together side by side*, according to [Ritchie and Rigano \(2007\)](#) descriptions of collaborative writing. In their collaboration, they worked together all the time starting from the planning process, until the part of negotiating, and revising. When sharing ideas and opinions, participants expose their social interaction. Therefore, before the collaboration, they were told that the work should be contributed together. [Yong \(2010\)](#) emphasizes the importance of understanding amongst the participants that they are expected to have mutual interaction and be able to listen to cooperate in sharing perspective and views on a topic given. The participants collaborated in writing problem-solution essays and their communication during the process of collaborations were recorded in order to gain

data on what they discussed. In the first phase, only the Indonesian participants worked in pairs. Secondly, the Indonesian participants were paired with the Chinese participants to do the collaboration. These pairs are seen as in Table 1. The total data set accumulated from the collaborations are six sessions transcriptions ranging from a 17-minute and 15-second to a 59-minute and 38-second pair-talks taken from the eight participants.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The Discussion of Indonesian-Indonesian and Chinese-Indonesian Pairs

This study reveals that in their collaboration of writing an argumentative essay, both Indonesian-Indonesian pairs and the Indonesian-Chinese pairs were found to discuss three categories with the codes as shown below.

4.1.1 *Category 1: Content*

Code: topic
 Code: main idea
 Code: supporting idea
 Code: concluding idea
 Code: introductory idea
 Code: confirming main idea
 Code: explaining main idea
 Code: choosing the next main idea
 Code: confirming supporting idea
 Code: idea in a paragraph
 Code: choosing title

Category 1, content, is the part of the participants' discussion that focuses on the ideas to be written in the essay. The findings show that the content category that the participants discussed are about choosing the topic of the essay, asking what idea to write in the essay, discussing which one is the main idea and which ones are the supporting details, confirming and explaining the ideas to each other, and negotiating the opinions as their ideas to be written in the essay. In this category, most of the time the participants shared their opinions and ideas to be written in the essay explaining, and negotiating them to get the final agreement on what to write in their essay. The examples from the expert on the content category:

Excerpt 1

Example of content category, code: main idea

IS1: "Yeah we write about the problems like public transportation, pollution, or flooding or traffic jam".

IS2: "So the problem we want to make about?".

IS1: "Traffic jam".

IS2: "The cause of traffic jam".

Excerpt 2

Example of content category, code: confirming main idea

CS3: “We should explain what the stressful the people face?”

IS4: “Yaa the reasons what”.

CS3: “And we will finally give some suggestion”.

Excerpt 3

Example of content category, code: idea in a paragraph

CS3: “I think for the first paragraph we should talk about following the economic have growth with rapidly”.

IS3: “Ooh ya ya nowadays”.

CS3: “The economic growth rapidly”.

Excerpt 1 shows an example of how Pair 1 discusses what main ideas to write, coded as ‘main idea’. Pair 1 chose question number 2 ‘Although most people are richer than in the past, modern life seems very stressful, and the number of people suffering from stress are at record levels. What are the main causes of stress in modern life, and how could the stress be reduced?’, and in their discussion, they chose ‘traffic jam’ as the cause of stress or as the main idea. When it is coded as ‘main idea’, it means that the participants did not mention the specific paragraph. They only brainstormed for the first time as a response to the question. Later in their discussion, they would discuss the main ideas more in detail such as the main idea of each paragraph. Furthermore, it includes negotiating, adding, compromising, or eliminating ideas to write more specifically.

In the content category, other than choosing main ideas, the participants confirmed what they had previously said as shown in Excerpt 2. The code ‘confirming main idea’ means that they have mentioned the options of main ideas and they confirm for the final choice. The last example as shown in Excerpt 3, the participants were discussing main ideas by mentioning the specific paragraph. In conclusion, codes in this category are about participants’ opinions and recommendations on what to write in the essay.

The second category found in the interaction is structural organization and the codes as explained in the next sub section.

4.1.1 Category 2: Structural organization

Code: where to write

Code: number of sentences

Code: number of paragraphs

Code: number of words

Category 2, structural organization, is the part of the conversation that focuses on the organization of the essay. This part includes questions about in which paragraph an idea should be written and questions about the number of words, sentences, and paragraphs in the essay. These are some examples of this category from the excerpt:

Excerpt 4

Example of structural organization category, code: number of sentences

CS3: “Ya. How many sentences in the first paragraph?”

IS3: “First paragraph? we should find the lead in aaa”.

Excerpt 5

Example of structural organization category, code: where to write

IS1: “Oh for the introduction first where we want to write what the cause? in the first paragraph or in the second? I think....”

CS1: “In the first and the second we can write the problem and the solution because in the first paragraph we ask and in the second paragraph we also and in the third paragraph we also so”.

IS1: “So we write modern life is creating stress and we all react the same way”.

CS1: “It’s Ok I think”.

Excerpt 6

Example of structural organization category, code: number of words

IS1: “Do you want to read it?”

CS1: “Ok it’s 100 words”.

Excerpts 4, 5, and 6 show the conversation about words, sentences and paragraphs. In Excerpt 4, the participants discussed the number of sentences they wanted to write in a paragraph. One of them answered in detail that one of the sentences they should write in the first paragraph is called ‘lead-in’. By doing this, they could find out how many sentences they would write in the first paragraph.

In Excerpt 5, a participant asked for the other’s opinion on where to write an idea. The response further answered not only for paragraph 1, but also for paragraphs 2 and 3. This pair had discussed the main ideas they wanted to write. This code ‘where to write’ means they decided where to write those main ideas they had previously agreed on. This can be functioned as an outline of their essay as they set up the structure before writing the complete essay with the complete ideas.

Lastly, in Excerpt 6, the pair discussed the number of sentences they had written. By doing this, they are aware of the requirement of the question they should answer in their essay, including the number of words they should write.

The last category found in the interaction between the participants is language as explained in the next sub section.

4.1.3 Category 3: Language

Code: vocabulary meaning

Code: vocabulary choice

Code: spelling

Code: vocabulary translation

Code: grammar choice

Code: phrase choice

Code: grammar choice
Code: phrase choice
Code: grammar correction
Code: editing supporting statement
Code: asking for expression
Code: translating expression
Code: sentence choice
Code: choosing topic sentence

The language category focuses on the discussion of vocabulary, phrase, spelling, grammar, statement, expression, and sentence. The findings show that the participants questioned each other about the meaning and the choice of words to be written in their essays. Sometimes, in the interaction of Indonesian-Indonesian pairs, they also spelled and translated the words from L1 to L2. However, the mixed pairs did not discuss this category quite often. Examples from the transcriptions are shown below.

Excerpt 7:

An episode of language category, code: grammar choice

IS2: "So far the flooding haven't solved so much".
IS1: "The flooding hasn't solved yah?"
IS2: "Hasn't been solved yet".
IS1: "Hasn't? haven't? hasn't?"
IS2: "Has. Hasn't been solved".

Excerpt 8:

An episode of language category, code: spelling

IS4: "Seems like?"
CS3: "Things".
IS4: "Or seen?"
CS3: "Ya"
IS4: "T-H-I-N-G-S (spelling)"

Excerpt 9

An episode of language category, code: vocabulary choice

IS4: "Because I think student is very important for work"
IS4: "Work?"
CS4: "Working"

In Excerpt 7, the pair discussed grammar specifically on the form of the present perfect passive confirming on the correct use of 'been' and 'have/has'. Excerpts 8 and 9 show discussion on word spelling and pronunciation check to ensure the accuracy of the words they mention to their writing partner. [Wigglesworth and Storch \(2012\)](#) report in their study on collaborative writing and the role of corrective feedback the participants shared during the collaboration that they offered correction in each other's input on the language to write in their essay. The corrections are on the language rules

they had learned previously or the intuitive linguistically correct sounds they considered.

According to the sociocultural perspective, in order to produce understanding on complex ideas, students should be allowed to use L1 during collaborative conversation (Swain & Lapkin, 2013). However, in this study, Indonesian-Indonesian pairs mostly used English to speak in their dialogues although they were not instructed to use English all the time and were permitted to use L1. Interestingly, as the transcription from their audio recording has shown, very little Indonesian was used and it was just in the form of words such as shown in this excerpt:

Excerpt 10

An episode of language category, code: vocabulary translation

IS3: “*Minim*. What does *minim* in English?”

IS4: “It’s minimized but minimized is a verb. The minimalize...limited workplace...I think we could just use limited. Limited workplace, limited ideas.”

This finding is different from the previous research on bilingual college writers collaborative writing (Esquinca, 2011) that the participants used both English and Spanish to interact where English is used to discuss the content of the text and Spanish was used to talk about the preparation or to talk about the text.

In conclusion, the answer to the question of what the participants discussed in their collaboration are found in three categories. The categories are on the linguistic, structural, and the aspect of ideas of the writing. This result is similar to the investigation by Leeser (2004) on some aspects in the respondents’ discussions: the language aspects of the writing (lexical or grammatical problems) the structure or the organization of the text and other non-grammatical related ideas. However, in this research, in addition to that, the aspect of transactional such as confirming, explaining, and negotiating also exist, particularly in the discussion of idea/content category.

4.2 The Differences and Similarities in Verbal Interaction between Indonesian-Indonesian and Chinese Indonesian Pairs

Findings about the differences and similarities in verbal interaction between the two types of pairs are tabulated in Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5. Tables 2, 3, and 4 show the frequency of each code in each category. Furthermore, in Table 5, the total numbers of frequency of each category in each pair are compared to find the similarities and differences between the two types of pairs. Lastly, Table 6 shows the differences of the length of time the pairs used in their collaboration.

The results reveal that the two types of pairs similarly discussed the content/ideas category (150 times as shown in Table 2) of the text more often than the structure category (9 times as shown in Table 3) and language category (65 times as shown in Table 4). It means the participants similarly consented more to what they should write instead of where they should write and how to write it.

Table 2. Category 1: Content.

Codes	Pair 1 (Ind- Ind)	Pair 2 (Ind- Ind)	Pair 3 (Ind- China)	Pair 4 (Ind- China)	Pair 5 (Ind- China)	Pair 6 (Ind- China)
Topic	0	0	1	0	1	0
Main idea	2	1	2	0	4	4
Supporting idea	19	14	16	22	20	20
Concluding idea	2	0	1	0	1	1
Introductory idea	0	0	0	1	0	0
Confirming main idea	0	0	0	1	0	0
Explaining main idea	0	0	0	0	2	0
Choosing the next main idea	1	0	2	1	0	1
Confirming supporting idea	0	1	1	0	0	1
Idea in a paragraph	0	1	3	0	1	0
Choosing title	0	1	1	0	0	0
Total from each pair	24	18	27	25	29	27
Total from all pairs	150					

Table 3. Category 2: Structural organization.

Codes	Pair 1 (Ind- Ind)	Pair 2 (Ind- Ind)	Pair 3 (Ind- China)	Pair 4 (Ind- China)	Pair 5 (Ind- China)	Pair 6 (Ind- China)
where to write	1	0	1	0	1	0
number of sentences in a paragraph	0	0	0	0	1	0
number of paragraphs	0	0	1	0	1	0
number of words	0	0	2	1	0	0
Total from each pair	1	0	4	1	3	0
Total from all pairs	9					

In their discussion, one person from each pair took a role as the writer while the other one gave ideas as they were discussing the essay. The ones who held the pens, however, seemed most of the time decided where to write the ideas and the words, and the one who decided the structure of the essay because they did not question a lot about it as much as they discussed the contents. Therefore, there is only a small amount of discussion about the structural organization of the essay (see Table 2).

On the other hand, some differences also appeared in the collaboration between Indonesian-Indonesian pairs and Indonesian-Chinese pairs which could be described as the following. From Table 4, it can be seen that Indonesian-Indonesian pairs discussed the language category more often than Indonesian-Chinese pairs. They shared the opinion about the choice of vocabulary in their essay more often than the mixed pairs.

Indonesian-Chinese pairs, on the other hand, used 60%-96% of the overall collaboration to discuss the content of the essay (see Table 5, Pairs 3-6) and only about 18% of the collaboration to discuss the language. The language used in their writings were mostly decided by the one who wrote the text. Therefore, they did not question about the language category often or even did not question it at all as shown in Pair 4 in Table 4. This result is similar to the study by [Kessler and Bikowski \(2010\)](#) on collaborative writing that the nature of participants' contribution was more to the content/ideas contributed by each other compared to the language related category.

Table 4. Category 3: Language.

Codes	Pair 1 (Ind-Ind)	Pair 2 (Ind-Ind)	Pair 3 (Ind-China)	Pair 4 (Ind-China)	Pair 5 (Ind-China)	Pair 6 (Ind-China)
Vocabulary meaning	0	0	2	0	1	0
Vocabulary choice	10	10	1	0	7	1
Spelling	0	2	1	0	4	0
Vocabulary translation	2	6	0	0	0	0
Grammar choice	2	0	3	0	1	0
Phrase choice	1	3	0	0	1	0
Grammar correction	0	0	0	0	2	0
Editing supporting statement	1	0	0	0	0	0
Asking for expression	0	1	0	0	0	0
Translating expression	0	1	0	0	0	0
Sentence choice	0	0	1	0	0	0
Choosing topic sentence	0	0	1	0	0	0
Total from each pair	16	23	9	0	16	1
Total from all pairs	65					

With the number of words ranging from 250-350 words, the time spent in Indonesian-Chinese is longer than Indonesian-Indonesian pairs. It can be assumed that, in accordance with the most discussed category in the mixed pairs, they needed a longer time to get the agreement on the ideas to be written in their essay (see Table 6).

Table 5. Comparison of the category frequency in each pair.

Pair	Content Category	Structure Category	Language Category	Total Number
1 (Ind-Ind)	24 (58%)	1 (0,02%)	16 (39%)	41
2 (Ind-Ind)	18 (44%)	0 (0%)	23 (56%)	41
3 (Ind-China)	27 (68%)	4 (10%)	9 (24%)	40
4 (Ind-China)	25 (96%)	1 (0,04%)	0 (0%)	26
5 (Ind-China)	29 (60%)	3 (0,07%)	16 (33%)	48
6 (Ind-China)	27 (96%)	0 (0%)	1 (0,04%)	28

Table 6. Duration of conversation each pair spent in collaboration of writing the essays.

Pairs	Duration
1 (Ind-Ind)	17 minutes and 15 seconds
2 (Ind-Ind)	19 minutes and 58 seconds
3 (Ind-China)	40 minutes and 55 seconds
4 (Ind-China)	29 minutes and 11 seconds
5 (Ind-China)	44 minutes and 59 seconds
6 (Ind-China)	59 minutes and 38 seconds

6. CONCLUSION

Collaboration, as many studies have found, has rich aspects to be examined and explored. One of those is the interaction in collaborative writing between Indonesian

and international students, as what this study has revealed, which could contribute some input to research on the topic. In conclusion, this study has shown some pertinent points to be addressed. The first is that there are three major categories in their spoken interaction: what to write (ideas), where to write (structural organization), and how to write (language-related). The second is that similarly all pairs discussed the what to write (ideas) more than the other categories. However, Indonesian-Indonesian pairs discussed on how to write (language related) more than the Indonesian-Chinese pairs. As a result, the Indonesian-Chinese pairs spent longer length of time in their discussions because they negotiated more on what to write (ideas). By knowing the tendency, the students, teachers, and other practitioners in writings would be able to take it as a reference when they perform collaborative writing tasks. Furthermore, it is also drawn from the collaboration that differences in the cultural background (countries) do not become the factor that hold back participants from collaborating. Their collaboration occurred without any problems.

Lastly, this study has some limitations. This study has an equal number of participants from different countries but does not have the equal number of different types of pairs. There are only 2 Indonesian-Indonesian pairs, while there are 4 Indonesian-Chinese pairs. Although the findings about the most dominant category on their discussion were not taken from the average calculation on each type of pair, the equal number of pairs could give balance representation of the data in general. Therefore, this equal number of pairs of different types needs be ensured in future studies. Furthermore, future studies on collaboration in writing could include participants from other countries so that the results of this research could represent broader context and not limited only to Indonesian and Chinese students.

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